

Municipal Mercury Elimination Policy and Plan



Great Lakes Binational Toxics
Strategy Mercury Workgroup
May 14, 2003





Regional Municipality of Niagara

- 12 area municipalities (population 423,000)
- 170,000 households
- Regional Gov't employs over 2,000
- Region responsible for various services: water and wastewater, solid waste, health, policing, community services, 764 km of roads, includes 53 facilities, rental of over 30 other facilities

• • Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators (AMRC)

- Non profit organization formed in 1987
- facilitate sharing of municipal waste reduction and recycling information and experience
- coordinates specialized workshops and seminars
- produces reports, manuals and other documents on specific waste management and waste diversion topics of interest to municipalities

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Background - AMRC/Niagara

- *Ontario Municipal White Goods Collection and Mercury Switch Removal Survey & Report, March 2000*
 - *Pilot and accompanying video - Removal of Mercury from White Goods, April 2001-February 2002*
 - *Both Projects funded by Environment Canada*
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Background -Project Rationale

- Research indicated there was no concentrated effort by any GTA municipality to reduce or eliminate mercury from operations
- AMRC approached Environment Canada for project funding, Niagara hosted project
- Finished product could be used by other municipalities to develop their own plans and policies

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Project Overview

- Development of a working group
- Inventory all mercury containing devices
- Prepare Elimination Plans for each applicable department
- Development of a Regional Mercury Elimination Policy statement
- Develop an Outreach Program

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Department Involvement

- **Waste Management Services Division (Public Works)**
 - **Health Department**
 - **Transportation Services Division (Public Works)**
 - **Community Services Department**
 - **Operational Support Services Division (Public Works)**
 - **Water and Wastewater Division (Public Works)**
 - **Corporate Services (Purchasing Dept.)**
 - **Police Services**
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Project Results

- **Audit (inventory) results:**
 - **28,403 Fluorescent Lamps**
 - **1,372 High pressure Sodium Lamps**
 - **148 metal hylide lamps**
 - **137 mercury vapour lamps**
 - **163 UV disinfection lamps**
 - **262 Thermometers**
 - **750 switches**
 - **20 sensors**
 - **8 flow meters**
 - **50 pieces, medical equipment and thermometers**
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Department Mercury Elimination Plans

- Were developed based on audit findings and mercury alternatives available in the marketplace
 - Plans were submitted by the respective working group members to departmental management teams for approval
 - Plans implemented individual departments once approved by Regional Council
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Policy Statement

- Goal is to eliminate mercury from operations
- Make reasonable efforts to upgrade to low or non-mercury alternatives where they exist
- Ensure the mercury is disposed in an environmentally sound manner.



Proposed Outreach - Examples

- Enhanced mercury removal from old appliances
 - Thermometer and thermostat take-back programs
 - Encourage auto wreckers to remove switches
 - Promote audits and mercury reduction programs at hospitals and clinics
 - Encourage dental offices to install dental waste amalgam separators
 - Education - inform municipal Purchasing Depts. about mercury and the environment
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Potential Issues

- Costs and availability of switching to non-mercury bearing devices
- Mercury disposal costs
- Timelines for implementation of elimination plans
- Outreach program costs

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Yet To Come..

- Approval of all Departmental Mercury Elimination Plans (in progress)
- Council Approval of Mercury Elimination Plans and Policy (in draft form)
- Both of the above will be considered by Regional Council for approval by June 2003
- Implementation of plans



A Special Thank you to...

- Environment Canada for providing funding assistance for this project
- Regional Municipality of Niagara for hosting this project

